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BERGEN COUNTY
BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS
HACKENSACK, NEW JERSEY
PUBLIC MEETING HELD VIA WEB EX
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2020
COMMENCING AT 7:05 P.M.

FREEHOLDERS PRESENT:

- MARY J. AMOROSO, CHAIRWOMAN
- DR. JOAN M. VOSS, VICE CHAIRWOMAN
- STEVEN A. TANELLI, CHAIR PRO TEMPORE
- DAVID L. GANZ
- GERMAINE M. ORTIZ
- THOMAS J. SULLIVAN
- TRACY SILNA ZUR

FREEHOLDERS ABSENT:

NONE

KIM O. FURBACHER, C.C.R., R.M.R.
P.O. BOX 213
ROCHELLE PARK, NEW JERSEY 07662-0213
201-336-6200

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ALSO PRESENT VIRTUALLY:

JAMES J. TEDESCO III
BERGEN COUNTY EXECUTIVE

LARA RODRIGUEZ
CLERK TO THE BOARD

JULIEN X. NEALS, ESQUIRE
ACTING COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

EDWARD J. FLORIO, ESQUIRE
COUNSEL TO THE BOARD

MICHAEL SHEINFELD
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & POLICY

AMANDA KARPINSKI
AIDE TO CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO

KIM O. FURBACHER, C.C.R., R.M.R.
P.O. BOX 213
ROCHELLE PARK, NEW JERSEY 07662-0213
201-336-6200

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HEARING OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC

NAME . PAGE

(No one wishing to comment)

1 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: The meeting is
2 called to order at 7:05 p.m.

3 Before we begin our meeting, I ask that
4 everyone to please take a moment to silence your
5 cellphone.

6 Thank you.

7 Will the Clerk please read the Sen.
8 Byron Baer Open Public Meetings Act.

9 MS. RODRIGUEZ: In accordance with
10 Section 5 of the Sen. Byron Baer Open Public Meetings
11 Act, adequate notice of this meeting has been
12 provided in the Annual Notice Schedule, which
13 contained the time, date, and location of this
14 meeting, copies of which Notices were forwarded to
15 the official County newspapers, to wit: The Herald
16 News and The Record, and a copy of which was posted
17 on the bulletin board in the Bergen County Justice
18 Center and Administration Building, One Bergen County
19 Plaza, Hackensack, New Jersey, and filed with the
20 Office of the Bergen County Clerk.

21 ROLL CALL

22 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Will the Clerk
23 please call the roll.

24 (At this point in the proceeding roll
25 call is taken with Freeholders Ganz, Ortiz, Sullivan,

1 Tanelli, Silna Zur, Vice-Chairwoman Voss, and
2 Chairwoman Amoroso present.)

3 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Evidence of a
4 quorum is present.

5 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

6 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Will you please
7 join me for the Pledge of Allegiance.

8 (At this point in the proceeding all
9 rise for a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.)

10 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.

11 MOMENT OF SILENCE

12 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Please join us as
13 we start our Moment of Silence with the tragic death
14 of George Floyd.

15 We mourn George Floyd and the long line
16 of victims who have suffered before him.

17 The self-righteous and self-justifying
18 brutality of racism has been with us since the very
19 beginning. Even Thomas Jefferson, the man who penned
20 the words "We hold these truths to be
21 self-evident...that all men are created equal," owned
22 more than 600 slaves and expanded his wealth by
23 siring more slaves with his enslaved mistress.

24 We Americans pride ourselves on our
25 ability to reset our nation's moral vision to become

1 a kinder, fairer, more respectful home for all those
2 in our melting pot.

3 The biggest reset was the Civil War,
4 which cost the lives of 750,000 men, North and South,
5 more than 150 years ago in order to end the
6 institution of slavery.

7 But Emancipation and Reconstruction
8 didn't end the brutality of racism.

9 We think of lynchings and cross
10 burnings and Jim Crow as part of the far past.

11 We think of school segregation and back
12 of the bus and separate drinking fountains and
13 redlining when blacks try to buy a home as part of
14 the more recent past.

15 We have done reset after reset, and
16 congratulated ourselves each time for sending racism
17 to the trash heap of history. About 150 years after
18 the Civil War, black people are being killed for
19 selling cigarettes on the street, for jogging through
20 a residential neighborhood, for minor violations.
21 They are suspect for doing a personal activity, even
22 bird watching, while being black.

23 White supremacy and voter suppression
24 are still part of the American conversation. We may
25 not lynch anymore, but we are still taking the lives

1 of our fellow citizens in our streets and our
2 neighborhoods.

3 Our jails are full of blacks who
4 committed offenses white people would not be jailed
5 for. Schools and housing and health care are
6 inferior in black neighborhoods.

7 George Floyd, Ahmad Arbery, Breonna
8 Taylor, God rest their souls, make it impossible to
9 ignore the fact that racism kills. And racism
10 continues to be a daily experience that harms black
11 people's health and mental health and leads to
12 chronic disease and poor outcomes, even for educated,
13 middle class black moms and their babies. Racism
14 diminishes and brutalizes all of us.

15 Here in Bergen County, our Sheriff
16 Anthony Cureton is a leading proponent of community
17 policing to build bridges between law enforcement and
18 diverse communities. Many of us have gone through
19 implicit bias training to make us more aware of the
20 biases we unconsciously harbor.

21 We are anguished over the loss of our
22 fellow Americans and anguished over the outpouring of
23 raw hurt that has sent other fellow Americans into
24 the streets to protest. It is time to pray, to stand
25 together and join hands, to apologize, and to

1 solemnly vow to one another that we believe in our
2 hearts, in our core, that all men are created equal
3 and have an equal right to life, liberty, respect,
4 and the pursuit of happy opportunity.

5 I would like to ask my colleagues for
6 their thoughts.

7 If I may, I will start with Freeholder
8 Zur.

9 FREEHOLDER SILNA ZUR: Thank you very
10 much, Chairwoman. So beautifully said and
11 summarized.

12 I have likewise been feeling this
13 anguish at the death of George Floyd, Ahmad Arbery,
14 and so many "him" and "them," and I honestly haven't
15 known what to say because the words sound trite.

16 I'm going to quote a former president
17 who in my lifetime I never thought I would quote.
18 George Bush recently said that "The only way to see
19 ourselves in a true light is to listen to the voices
20 of so many who are hurting and grieving. Those who
21 set out to silence those voices do not understand the
22 meaning of America or how it becomes a better place."

23 So I have actually found myself
24 listening, and I understand that I will never
25 understand. I will never fully understand the

1 anguish and fear people of color deal with when their
2 son gets a driver's license, or, I know that there is
3 a privilege that I have because of the color of my
4 skin. And while I have tried, whether it's with my
5 nonprofit, We the People - Embrace. Empower.
6 Engage. to engage our kids into rolling up their
7 sleeves and getting together in service and getting
8 to know each other as people rather than as labels
9 and to see through a lens that does not include bias,
10 it feels like we're bailing out a flood with a
11 thimble and there's so much more to do.

12 I know that all of us on this Board
13 engage with our diverse community in meaningful ways,
14 and we listen and we strive, whether it's training
15 minority owned businesses and bringing them into our
16 bidding process or reaching out through so many
17 different avenues. There is just so much work that
18 we need to do. And I will tell you that I have been
19 encouraged by so many young people who are raising
20 their voices peacefully here in Bergen County. The
21 protests that took place in Oakland last night, in
22 Ridgewood today, in so many other places have really
23 put a different view on how we can work together to
24 be more empathetic, have a shared commitment of
25 empathy and bold action rooted in peace.

1 So for all of you who are going to be
2 at protests, whether it's tomorrow, Friday, Saturday,
3 there are so many throughout our community, please
4 remember, we're still in the middle of a pandemic,
5 wear your masks, and understand what raising our
6 voices means and the impact that it can have to truly
7 effectuate change.

8 Thank you so much, Chairwoman.

9 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you,
10 Freeholder.

11 Would any other Freeholder like to
12 speak?

13 FREEHOLDER SULLIVAN: Yes.

14 I would just like to read a statement
15 into the record, Chairwoman.

16 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you,
17 Freeholder Sullivan.

18 FREEHOLDER SULLIVAN: The past nine
19 days have been filled with a wave of emotion for
20 everyone in America.

21 In the midst of the unprecedented
22 public health crisis, we are now confronting some of
23 the hard truths about our country.

24 While I am as outraged as everyone else
25 about the incidents of injustice that have occurred,

1 I'm also saddened with the realization that we still
2 have a long way to go.

3 I cannot speak personally about the
4 difficulties faced by minorities in our society.
5 They have experienced frustrations and difficulties
6 in their everyday lives that I will never know, but
7 that doesn't mean that I won't help be a part of the
8 solution.

9 I believe that I have always lived my
10 life to be as inclusive as possible and to respect
11 everyone for who they are. I am ready, willing and
12 able to do my part to change things for the better,
13 and I encourage everyone to do the same.

14 George Floyd was murdered by
15 individuals who took an oath to protect not only him
16 but all of us and failed to uphold it. And I call
17 them "individuals" because that's what they've
18 become. They've lost the right to be part of a
19 greater group, the group of men and woman who bravely
20 put on a uniform, never dishonor the oath that they
21 took. That is the group that I support, both as an
22 elected official and as a citizen.

23 I know that Mr. Floyd's death is not an
24 isolated incident. I know that there is much reform
25 needed in order to prevent anything similar from

1 happening. Again, I will always support peaceful and
2 insightful discussion that will lead to changes we
3 can all be accepting of.

4 I truly hope that as a country this is
5 the time in our history that we make the lasting
6 change that is needed. It's time. It's time.
7 Enough is enough. And I just hope that enough people
8 can get through the rioting and other things to
9 realize what really is going on and why everyone is
10 so angry. It's time to make a change.

11 Thank you, Freeholder.

12 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you,
13 Freeholder Sullivan.

14 FREEHOLDER TANELLI: Chairwoman, if I
15 may?

16 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Yes, Freeholder
17 Tanelli please.

18 FREEHOLDER TANELLI: Thank you.

19 Throughout our nation, Americans are in
20 pain. They are mourning the 100,000 lives lost to
21 the COVID-19, dealing with the unprecedented levels
22 of unemployment, and seeking to comprehend the tragic
23 death of George Floyd.

24 Since the foundation of this nation,
25 we've struggled with race relations. Each generation

1 has strived to make America better and address our
2 history of injustice and inequality.

3 As we seek to move our country forward
4 from this tragedy, we must join together to ensure
5 that the legacy of George Floyd does not deepen the
6 racial divide, but rather serve as a catalyst for
7 progress. We cannot let those who wish to loot and
8 vandalize overwhelm the voices of those who are
9 working for progress in a peaceful and lawful manner.

10 It is my sincere hope all of us, as
11 Bergen County elected officials, that we may use this
12 moment to continue the dialogue in our county and
13 work together towards meaningful change while
14 understanding that the vast majority of our law
15 enforcement officers passionately and respectfully do
16 their job and seek to protect and serve our
17 residents.

18 Thank you, Chairwoman.

19 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you,
20 Freeholder Tanelli.

21 Anyone else?

22 FREEHOLDER ORTIZ: Chairwoman?

23 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Yes, Freeholder
24 Ortiz.

25 FREEHOLDER ORTIZ: Yes.

1 I just want to say that we're going
2 through so much pain, not only through our health
3 crisis that we've been going through, but just what
4 happened with George Floyd and all these incidents
5 that are going on through our history. Race
6 relations and police brutality are issues that can be
7 no longer ignored. People throughout our country are
8 clamoring for leadership and a solution to this
9 injustice.

10 Too many times throughout history we've
11 witnessed excessive force in place of deescalation
12 and peaceful resolution, especially in communities of
13 color. So I want to applaud our peaceful protesters
14 in New Jersey for making their voices heard, and the
15 courageous police officers who have joined and
16 kneeled with protesters in objection to this horrific
17 murder. We need to stand together with love and
18 compassion for our future, for our children, and for
19 the future of our country.

20 Like Martin Luther King, Jr. said,
21 "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice
22 everywhere."

23 Thank you.

24 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you,
25 Freeholder.

1 Madam Chairman?

2 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Yes, Freeholder
3 Voss.

4 VICE-CHAIRWOMAN VOSS: I was muted.
5 That's why you didn't hear me.

6 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Well, you're here
7 now.

8 VICE-CHAIRWOMAN VOSS: I've been
9 thinking for several days what I would like to say
10 about the situation that we're facing.

11 I had lived through many horrible
12 events in my life and have participated in many
13 demonstrations to protest injustices, but all of
14 these demonstrations were organized and peaceful.

15 I've spent my entire life trying to
16 stamp out prejudice, bigotry, and, most of all,
17 ignorance.

18 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. set the
19 example of how to deal with the despicable actions of
20 those who try to take away or deny the inalienable
21 rights of all of us, this right to assemble and to
22 bring injustices to public attention. King advocated
23 action, but nonviolent action. He had studied the
24 ways of Mohandas Gandhi, who had gotten the freedom
25 for Indians from the tyranny of the British without

1 violent actions.

2 This was the practice of most of the
3 demonstrations, until the brutal murder of George
4 Floyd. This horrific murder was seen by everyone on
5 television. In my opinion, I think the police
6 officer who killed George Floyd should be charged
7 with first degree murder.

8 I understand that first degree murder
9 is supposed to be premeditated, but I think, because
10 I guess I'm a want-a-be lawyer, there's a lot more to
11 this particular situation than we are now aware of.
12 People were incensed and the demonstrations began.

13 The peaceful demonstrators were
14 co-opted by evil individuals who used the situation
15 to bring about rioting, looting, and unbelievable
16 acts of violence. These people are criminals and
17 should be treated as such.

18 The police officer who killed Floyd
19 must be punished. The police who stood by and did
20 nothing are also culpable and should be punished.

21 But we cannot condemn all of our police
22 for the acts of a few, and this is very important.

23 Many philosophers, like Albert Einstein
24 said, "The world will not be destroyed by those who
25 do evil, but by those who watch them and do nothing."

1 We must all do something. We must
2 stand together and stop violence and injustice, all
3 of us.

4 If you read the paper today, there were
5 many excellent, excellent editorials. And so now we
6 must practice what we preach.

7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: God bless. Thank
9 you, Freeholder.

10 Freeholder Ganz.

11 FREEHOLDER GANZ: Thank you,
12 Chairwoman. I will be very brief in what I have to
13 say.

14 I kneel with my brothers and sisters.
15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you,
17 Freeholder Ganz.

18 County Executive.

19 COUNTY EXECUTIVE TEDESCO: Thank you,
20 Freeholder Chairwoman, for giving me an opportunity
21 to address the Freeholder board and the public.

22 Good evening.

23 First and foremost, I hope that your
24 families are safe. I hope that every Bergen County
25 family is safe during this difficult time.

1 This is a dark moment in our nation.
2 At a time when calls for unity are basic commonsense,
3 we live in a reality where some in power have chosen
4 to double down on division.

5 I am deeply disturbed by the recent
6 killing of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police
7 officer last week. And let me say that I stand with
8 the peaceful protesters, peaceful protesters, across
9 our country, our state, and the nation, and we all
10 must do better. Good law enforcement means standing
11 against those who abuse the badge.

12 Our law enforcement agencies here in
13 Bergen County, many of whom have been practicing
14 community policing for years, I believe, are most of
15 the best in the country. I stand with them in
16 recognizing that we all can do better.

17 I hope for change in our country. I
18 hope for healing. I hope for learning. And I hope
19 for empathy.

20 To the people of Bergen County, please
21 know, we are always here to listen. We can help you
22 in making Bergen County better every day.

23 To the Board of Chosen Freeholders,
24 thank you for your guidance and your leadership, not
25 only during this period of time, but through the

1 entire pandemic, and, yes, through this dark time
2 that we're facing over the last week and a half.

3 We are still in the throes of the
4 COVID-19 virus. We need to continue to be aware of
5 how this virus can still cause death and sickness.
6 Please keep doing what we've been doing so that we
7 will not have more death and sickness.

8 Please, to all our Bergen County
9 family, be safe, and, yes, we will have a better
10 Bergen County in the future.

11 Thank you, Freeholder Chairwoman.

12 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you, County
13 Executive.

14 We will go on to our other rest in
15 peace.

16 Also passing recently, Lori Ann (Mudry)
17 Beck, age 47. She was the chief financial officer in
18 Little Ferry, a terrible loss for that town and for
19 all of us, who died in a vehicle crash.

20 And Saddle Brook Police Officer Norma
21 Aedo, age 50, who died after being hospitalized
22 earlier in May with an undisclosed ailment.

23 We recognize the passing of 11,880
24 residents of the State of New Jersey, 1,529 of them
25 from Bergen County.

1 162,000 individuals in the State of New
2 Jersey have tested positive for COVID and almost
3 18,000 of those individuals are our Bergen County
4 neighbors.

5 We take a moment to remember Charles
6 "Chuck" Weidanz, age 92, who was owner and operator
7 for 40 years of Durabuilt Motors in North Arlington.

8 These losses are always shocking,
9 saddening, and you cope with one and another comes
10 up. Thank God they are starting to drop in number.

11 So we offer our condolences to everyone
12 who has lost someone during the pandemic.

13 A Moment of Silence, please, for our
14 departed souls.

15 (Whereupon, a Moment of Silence is
16 observed.)

17 RECOGNITION OF BERGEN COUNTY HEROES

18 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: During our Public
19 Meetings, we will continue to recognize all of the
20 good work by all of the good people in Bergen County,
21 our Bergen County Heroes.

22 We'll start with our Freeholder Ortiz.

23 FREEHOLDER ORTIZ: Thank you,
24 Chairwoman.

25 We recognize Pawel Mas Lag, founder of

1 the Garfield Neighbor Network. He was nominated by
2 Garfield Deputy Mayor Joseph Delaney and Councilwoman
3 Erin Nora Delaney for his commitment and resolve to
4 help the residents of Garfield and Bergen County.

5 Since inception, the Garfield Neighbor
6 Network and its many volunteers have gone on hundreds
7 of grocery store and pharmacy runs for
8 immunocompromised individuals and in-need senior
9 citizens, assisted Meals on Wheels North Jersey,
10 Garfield YMCA, Ridgewood YMCA, Garfield Police
11 Department with food drives and delivering meals to
12 over 200 families in Bergen County, published a
13 resource guide for the community, and conducted an
14 anonymous needs assessment survey to identify better
15 ways to allocate resources to address the most
16 pressing needs of Garfield residents and adjacent
17 municipalities.

18 Thank you, Pawel, and all the other 590
19 members of the Garfield Neighbor Network for your
20 dedication and hard work.

21 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you,
22 Freeholder Ortiz.

23 Next up is our leading Bergenfield
24 native, Freeholder Sullivan.

25 FREEHOLDER SULLIVAN: Today we

1 recognize Ryan Shell, the Emergency Management
2 Coordinator for Bergenfield Emergency Management. He
3 was nominated by Dana Macaluso Falcicchio.

4 For 22 years, Ryan has worked in
5 emergency medical services. He has been a member of
6 the Bergenfield Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Inc. since
7 2011 and currently serves as their chief.

8 In 2018, he was honored as a New Jersey
9 Fifth Congressional District Hometown Hero by
10 Congressman Josh Gottheimer for his actions in the
11 middle of a terrible Nor'easter that year, when he
12 and two colleagues rushed to a call of a woman in
13 labor in nearly two feet of snow. Together they
14 utilized their training to deliver a healthy baby
15 into the world.

16 As such, it should be no surprise that
17 Ryan Shell has stepped up to the plate since the
18 outbreak of COVID-19. As the Emergency Management
19 Coordinator for one of the hardest hit municipalities
20 in Bergen County, he has provided daily updates to
21 the residents of the Borough of Bergenfield via
22 social media, coordinated the distribution and
23 replenishment of PPE to the Bergenfield Police
24 Department, the Bergenfield Fire Department, and the
25 Bergenfield Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Inc., and he's

1 also assisted Mayor Arvin Amatorio and the
2 Bergenfield Council with the town's coronavirus
3 testing initiative and food distribution to in-need
4 families.

5 Thank you so much, Ryan, for your
6 dedication to the residents of Bergenfield and Bergen
7 County throughout your career as an EMT and for your
8 continuing commitment to your community.

9 To a Hometown Hero, thank you.

10 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you,
11 Freeholder Sullivan.

12 Next up, Chair Pro Tempore Steve
13 Tanelli.

14 FREEHOLDER TANELLI: Thank you,
15 Chairwoman.

16 Tonight I'd like to recognize Emilio
17 Flores, an amazing Lyndhurst, New Jersey second
18 grader, who was nominated by Lyndhurst teacher TJ
19 Kronche.

20 For his eighth birthday, Emilio told
21 his parents in a handwritten letter that he did not
22 want presents, instead he wanted his friends and
23 family to buy food to donate to the needy impacted by
24 COVID-19.

25 In total, 4,000 food items were

1 collected due to an outpouring of support by
2 neighbors, organizations, and the media for his
3 selfless action. The food items were donated to food
4 banks in Lyndhurst and Harrison.

5 Emilio, you are an inspiration to all
6 of us and a shining beacon during these difficult
7 times. We are proud to recognize you as a hero in
8 Bergen County.

9 Thank you, Chairwoman.

10 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.

11 We love you, Emilio!

12 If you have a nomination, Steve, the
13 email goes to where?

14 FREEHOLDER TANELLI: It goes to
15 bcfreeholdertanelli@gmail.com.

16 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Excellent!

17 Or you can send Steve a Facebook
18 message with a few photos and information about the
19 hero you want to nominate.

20 We continue to recognize and honor all
21 of the healthcare workers, grocery store employees,
22 postal workers, and all other essential employees who
23 continue to risk their lives every day going into
24 work to help us all stay home and stay healthy.

25 Please join me in a brief clap to honor

1 these men and women, who put themselves and their
2 families at risk every day and the tremendous work of
3 our Bergen County Heroes.

4 [APPLAUSE]

5 PRESENTATION OF COMMENDATION IN RECOGNITION OF JOE
6 MASCIANDARO, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF CAREPLUS NJ

7 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. Now we have
8 presentations.

9 Tonight we recognize Joe Masciandaro,
10 president and CEO of CarePlus New Jersey, Inc., on
11 the occasion of his recognition by the National
12 Council for Behavioral Health. He was recognized
13 with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

14 It's my honor to read into the record
15 this proclamation on behalf of the Freeholders.

16 Whereas, since 1978, Joe Masciandaro
17 has served as President and CEO of CarePlus
18 New Jersey, Inc., which provides integrated treatment
19 options designed to address behavioral healthcare
20 through advocacy, community education, and a complete
21 continuum of care.

22 Since Joe has been a fierce advocate
23 for continued funding and expansion of the Certified
24 Community Behavioral Health Clinic model nationwide,
25 and has been a champion for countless initiatives,

1 ensuring that those with mental illness and SUDs
2 receive the treatment and services they need.

3 I'm going to go down a little.

4 Whereas, in just the last 25 years, Joe
5 has exercised his leadership to develop CarePlus
6 Workforce Solutions; was the first in New Jersey to
7 provide "Mental Health First Aid"; partnered with
8 Bergen County Housing, Health and Human Services
9 shelter to address homelessness; launched the
10 Stigma-Free Initiative; was designated first
11 New Jersey Behavioral Health Home accredited by the
12 Joint Commission; took over management -- we honor
13 him for this alone -- of Bergen New Bridge Medical
14 Center; and launched Paradigm Therapeutic Day School,
15 an NJ DOE-approved private school for students with
16 behavioral health issues.

17 Joe was honored with the Lifetime
18 Achievement Award by the National Council for
19 Behavioral Health.

20 Now, therefore, be it resolved that the
21 Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders hereby
22 recognizes and declares June 3rd, 2020 "Joe
23 Masciandaro Honoree Day."

24 Tonight also we would like to recognize
25 three of our best and brightest Bergen County high

1 school students. These students have been selected
2 out of 161 high school seniors across the country to
3 become members of the 56th Class of Presidential
4 Scholars.

5 Congratulations to Young Eun Lee of
6 Northern Valley Regional High School in Demarest.
7 Congratulations to Dong Jun Lee of Bergen County
8 Technical High School in Teterboro. And
9 congratulations to Jason Ping of the Academy for the
10 Advancement of Science & Technology in Hackensack.

11 We are so proud of all of you, and we
12 want to congratulate you on your hard work and
13 academic success, and we expect to hear from you in
14 the future.

15 PRESENTATION OF THE 2020 COUNTY BUDGET

16 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Moving on, we will
17 now have a presentation of the 2020 County Budget
18 from County Executive Jim Tedesco.

19 COUNTY EXECUTIVE TEDESCO: Thank you,
20 Freeholder Chairwoman and members of the Freeholder
21 Board.

22 I am addressing you this evening with a
23 budget that looks a whole lot different than the
24 budget that we started to put together at the end of
25 last year and going into this year.

1 On March 4th, when Bergen County became
2 the first county in the State of New Jersey to have
3 the first positive case of COVID-19, little did I
4 know the impact that that would have on the county,
5 not only its people but its finances. And now as we
6 sit here on June 3rd, we are starting to realize some
7 of those financial impacts.

8 The budget that we're going to provide
9 to you tonight is the best that we could do under the
10 circumstances that we face today.

11 There are some numbers that we don't
12 know whether they're actually good or bad, they're
13 the best that we can come up with, given the
14 information that we have today.

15 The budget has got two large pieces of
16 questions.

17 One is revenue, and how much revenue
18 are we losing or will we lose until December 30,
19 2020. Because this virus is not just over when the
20 Governor goes to Phase II or Phase III or Phase IV.

21 The other is the amount of money that
22 we've spent to date and we will continue to spend in
23 order to protect the health and welfare of the
24 one million people that live here in Bergen County.

25 At the onset of this virus, Bergen

1 County, because we were financially prepared and
2 prepared from an emergency response and health
3 standpoint, we were able to provide support for the
4 local municipalities here in Bergen County.

5 We've expended millions and millions of
6 dollars, probably in excess of \$10 million already,
7 in helping our neighbors and our family here in
8 Bergen County, and, to be honest, even our neighbors
9 outside of Bergen County.

10 And this budget is our financial team's
11 best, I don't want to say "guess," but best estimate
12 as to what our continued expenses will be and the
13 impact the lost revenue will have for the rest of the
14 year.

15 The first few slides are more for
16 setting some of the stage and letting you know where
17 we stand today at this moment, and then I will go
18 into some of the number details as to what the budget
19 will look like.

20 So if you can move to Page 2.

21 So on May 18th, as you can see, the
22 county had a call with our rating agency and we laid
23 out to them in honesty what was going on within the
24 county. And as you can see, based on what we've told
25 the rating agencies and what we believe will happen

1 over the next seven months or eight months, the
2 rating agency continued to rate us as a Aaa. And if
3 you look at it, the quote that they said, "The county
4 will remain resilient and recover rapidly."

5 I don't know that I could have come up
6 with a better statement about Bergen County, but that
7 was the statement by the rating agency. And when you
8 look at the other bullets there, it talks about our
9 strong finances and large and wealthy tax base, which
10 again we have to hope that that will continue and
11 Bergen County will continue to come back quickly and
12 stronger. Modest debt and favorable location, and,
13 again, two things that work in our favor. And then
14 the 2019 real estate valuation of \$182.5 billion, up
15 from \$165 billion in 2015.

16 So those are some of the factors that
17 the rating agency looked at, and that's this Aaa
18 rating that we're able to hold onto and continue, at
19 least over the last five years that this
20 administration and the Freeholder Board has had
21 control, is a testament, because it's with the
22 financial work that we have done over the last five
23 years which has helped us get the resilience and
24 recover rapidly.

25 While there are pieces of it from a

1 countywide standpoint, they also looked very deeply
2 into our financial structure and our financial
3 situation and said that we are stable, and that means
4 a lot right now going into where we are with the
5 virus.

6 These are some of the areas where we
7 are looking at helping get relief, all from the
8 federal side, nothing yet from the state side, and I
9 say "yet" because I certainly hope that the bill that
10 the Governor is supporting in regards to the
11 borrowing will get passed, and that the federal
12 government will also look at doing another round of
13 relief so that the counties, municipalities and
14 states can use that money for the lack of revenue or
15 lost revenue or deficit recovery.

16 So there's three areas that the county
17 has received funding or will receive funding in.

18 The first is FEMA reimbursement. This
19 is a program that has been in existence for many
20 years. We can recover 75 percent of our costs that
21 are related to the COVID-19 response. The county
22 does have to provide a 25 percent match, so we only
23 get \$0.75 on the dollar from FEMA, and we've
24 submitted probably in excess of \$5 million already.

25 I have to say that FEMA does not

1 reimburse at a very rapid rate, and so part of this
2 is about our ability to continue to fund our expenses
3 and that's why it was so important that we continue
4 to collect the tax revenue from our municipal
5 partners, so that we could continue to run the county
6 government. That's how most of the funding that
7 happens to allow county government to operate is
8 through the tax base and the payments from our local
9 municipal partners.

10 So we are submitting to FEMA for
11 reimbursement, and hopefully we'll start getting some
12 payment in that regard.

13 The other area was the CARES Act. You
14 can see that Bergen County was awarded \$162 million.
15 That was done just based on population. So we're
16 close to a million people, so Bergen County got the
17 most money out of the counties in the State of New
18 Jersey.

19 And that money comes with our ability
20 to help our 70 municipalities, our sister agencies
21 around the county, Bergen New Bridge Medical Center,
22 the small business community, and, of course, the
23 County of Bergen.

24 And that \$162 million will be allotted
25 based on criteria that the federal government has

1 established for the way that money can be disbursed
2 from the county to those groups of folks there. And
3 there's also not-for-profits and others in there, we
4 didn't list every available group, but there's others
5 in there also.

6 And the last federal relief money is
7 the CDBG for COVID expenses, and you can see we
8 received \$5.5 million. And, again, this is to be
9 administered by the county to qualifying
10 municipalities that serve areas of low and moderate
11 income. So there are municipal partners that don't
12 get CDBG, have never gotten CDBG, they will never be
13 eligible for this, but our municipal partners who
14 have gotten CDBG money in the past and have expenses
15 that are tied to this type of funding, which is meant
16 to help for homelessness and paying for low income
17 meals and things like that, for those municipalities
18 that qualify for that, the process will be the same,
19 the same process that we go through for other CDBG
20 funding. So those are the funds that we will receive
21 from the federal government.

22 So this is some of the impact. We
23 didn't list them all for you, but you can see that
24 because of the pandemic, we had to go back and redo
25 the budget. I mean, this is a brand new budget, not

1 structurally with the main pieces, but it's a new
2 budget in regards to the dollars and the allocations
3 that we had originally put in.

4 So you can see that the impact on the
5 budget through forecasting methods estimated at a
6 current budget deficit of \$18.4 million.

7 Tens of millions of dollars in
8 resources in anticipated expenditures are needed, and
9 I talked about that a little bit just before.

10 And then the ongoing cost in
11 anticipated revenue will continue to fluctuate from
12 now and through the public health emergency. The
13 county financial team will continue to monitor the
14 costs. And the reason we put this in here is because
15 we don't know what's going to happen from the state
16 and federal government side. Those are still
17 unknowns.

18 So we could have less of a deficit, if
19 there's an ability to get funding through the state
20 or the federal government or if there are additional
21 cuts by the state and additional support that we have
22 always gotten from the state is less than, then that
23 number will grow, but this is what we see as of
24 June 3rd, 2020.

25 So this is some of the adjustments that

1 we made based on what the original budget looked like
2 on March 25th. We reduced \$4.2 million in budget
3 expenses. So, yes, every department in the county
4 has felt some pain in regards to having to cut an
5 additional \$4.2 million from the budget.

6 We've lowered anticipated revenues by
7 \$9.2 million from the original budget, and you can
8 see some of the areas that we're expecting lower
9 revenue. That's not all of them, but that's some of
10 them.

11 We've also utilized an additional
12 \$5 million in the county fund balance. And I have to
13 say to the Freeholders, this only could happen
14 because of the sound financial work that we've done
15 over the last five years, where we grew the fund
16 balance from approximately \$25 million to in excess
17 of \$50 million over the last five years. If we had
18 not done that, we wouldn't have been able to take
19 another \$5 million from the fund balance and still be
20 able to have enough money to make sure that we cover
21 ourselves for another emergency.

22 And then last, the \$7.2 million
23 reduction in capital improvement plans, we took a
24 hard look at our capital improvements for the year
25 2020 and we've taken a lot of the projects that we

1 were going to do and moved them back. We didn't
2 eliminate them, but we've moved them back in priority
3 to the subsequent years of '21, '22, and '23.

4 And, again, we were able to do that
5 why? Because we have a six-year plan. Which again
6 never happened before in the history of this county
7 where, when we came into office, the administration
8 puts a six-year prediction plan together for capital
9 spending and it lets us prioritize on a year-to-year
10 basis, but it also gives us the ability to look back
11 to where we would be spending money over the next
12 five years.

13 And what that allowed this year is for
14 us to say, okay, we can take this money and those
15 projects, and we can slot them in at other places and
16 make adjustments in those other years but not
17 increase the amount of money and decrease it for
18 2020.

19 So these are the adjustments that we've
20 made from the budget that we started with on
21 March 25th.

22 Here's a telling graph for you. You
23 can see how we grew revenues over the last four
24 years, and we've steadily increased our revenue and
25 you can see now in 2020 this is where we anticipate

1 to be.

2 So we had anticipated \$149 million, and
3 we're going to be at \$129 million. And, again, this
4 is our best guess. But this is a telling slide in
5 regards to all of you on trying to make everyone
6 understand the impact on revenue.

7 So here's where we are. We are giving
8 you a balanced budget and the best fiscally
9 responsible budget that we're able to provide you
10 with the information that we have. You can see the
11 number is at \$565 million, almost \$566 million. It's
12 a total appropriation increase of 2.9 percent from
13 last year. It's a four percent increase on the tax
14 levy. And we're going to spend \$45 million in
15 capital improvements for the year 2020.

16 To show it to you in graphic form, if
17 you could go to the next slide. Here's where the
18 allocation, the \$566 million is allocated.

19 When you look at it, the pie doesn't
20 change much from year to year. Our fixed costs for
21 benefits, pensions, Social Security, insurance, debt
22 service, that's the majority of the costs. It's
23 about 40 percent of the entire budget.

24 And then when you look at law
25 enforcement, it's almost 25 percent of the budget.

1 You look at our constitutional officers, education,
2 the nine departments under the county, and then you
3 have the other agencies and the things, but this is
4 the way in percentage the budget breaks out of the
5 \$566 million.

6 One of my favorite slides, you all know
7 I wish I could be there to give you your Grande
8 Starbucks, but if you look at the tax increase for
9 2020 on the average house at \$466,000, it is \$28.07.

10 When you look at that per month, it's
11 \$2.34.

12 And if you look at buying one Grande at
13 Starbucks a month at \$2.61, we're actually cheaper
14 than that Starbucks coffee for all the services and
15 the things that we continue to supply and that we did
16 during this pandemic and we continue to do during
17 this pandemic in providing services to the people,
18 the one million people of Bergen County that, in some
19 cases, services that have never ever been supplied in
20 the history of this county.

21 So while I would love to say that we
22 shouldn't have a tax increase and that we could do
23 better, I have to tell you that we want to do what's
24 right for the people of Bergen County. And in order
25 to provide the level of service that we feel is

1 needed through this crisis and through the rest of
2 the year, this budget allows us to have the ability
3 to do that.

4 The other part of this that I need to
5 let the Freeholders and the people of Bergen County
6 know is that we don't know what the impact that this
7 year will have on next year's budget. We are looking
8 at what could take place next year, and it could be a
9 very minimal impact or it could be a very severe
10 impact.

11 But given what we know today, this is
12 where we are today in giving you Freeholders a budget
13 that the administration is very, very comfortable
14 with, believes that it meets the needs of the one
15 million residents and the millions of others who come
16 into Bergen County during this crisis that we are
17 facing.

18 We use the word "crisis" more often
19 than not, depending on what's happening, but this
20 pandemic is a real true crisis. It's affected every
21 person and it's affected every department and every
22 employee that we have.

23 Our ability to deal with that on a
24 day-to-day basis, our ability to ensure that the
25 one million people who live here in Bergen County and

1 the millions who come to visit, the businesses that
2 we want to support through this crisis and our
3 employees, to make sure that they are healthy and
4 that they come to a workplace that is safe for them
5 to come to, this budget allows us to do that.

6 If you want to just go to the last
7 slide, Mike, I just want to give credit to these
8 folks under the leadership of Michael Bellucci and
9 Joe Luppino, Melissa, Marlene, Michael, Sadie, and
10 Jared.

11 Freeholders, they've worked extremely
12 hard in putting this budget together. I'm extremely
13 proud of them for the work that they have done to get
14 us to where we are today, along with our experts,
15 Steve Wielkocz, Dan Mariniello and others that are
16 helping us all in this way.

17 But, Freeholders, this is the 2020
18 budget. I wish I had different news for you, I can't
19 say "better," I just wish it was different, but,
20 Freeholders, what we are facing today no one else has
21 ever faced, at least in our lifetimes.

22 I thank you for the three months of
23 support that you've given to the administration as
24 we've waged this war on COVID. I will tell you that
25 we will win the battles and eventually we will win

1 the war. I appreciate all the help and support and
2 having our back along the way from all of you, the
3 words of encouragement that have come from all of
4 you. Please know that the work that was done on this
5 budget was done with the best intentions of everyone
6 and knowing that we want to continue to help the
7 people of Bergen County be safe and prosper when this
8 is all over, and this budget will help us do that.

9 Thank you, Freeholder Chairwoman.

10 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you, County
11 Executive.

12 FREEHOLDER TANELLI: Chairwoman, if I
13 may?

14 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Yes, Freeholder
15 Tanelli.

16 FREEHOLDER TANELLI: I know we're all
17 going to have our comments throughout this budget
18 process, but I just wanted to say thank you, Jim, to
19 you and your team for the efforts you've put into
20 this. When you break it down the way you did in the
21 presentation that you did, it really shows that the
22 work that your administration and work that we've
23 done in the last four years is starting to at least
24 help eliminate some of the pain that we're
25 experiencing with this year and possibly next year's

1 budget. So I want to thank you.

2 We always joked about the five-year,
3 six-year capital improvement plan, and we praised it
4 and we talked about it, now you see why we did it and
5 how it is paying dividends.

6 So all these things that we've
7 introduced and that we've worked together so closely
8 on has really started to pay dividends for the
9 taxpayers of Bergen County.

10 Although I'm sure we would all like to
11 deliver a different budget, there are reasons why we
12 came in this way, and it would be much worse if we
13 hadn't planned ahead like we've done over the last
14 four years.

15 So I want to thank you for the work you
16 did, the work you're doing, and I know my colleagues
17 are going to share my thoughts as well, that we're
18 happy that we're in this together.

19 So thanks, Jim.

20 COUNTY EXECUTIVE TEDESCO: Thank you,
21 Freeholder.

22 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: County Executive,
23 I know that Joe Luppino and Mike Bellucci and the
24 team had a budget already shaped up at the end of
25 February, and then it was like the pandemic just

1 exploded it.

2 I'm very happy to see that you have
3 been able to put the pieces back together and come up
4 with a balanced budget that has some cuts and some
5 pain but seems very well managed.

6 I do want to allow Mike Bellucci to say
7 a few words.

8 Are you there?

9 FREEHOLDER SILNA ZUR: Madam Chair, I'd
10 love to also chime in.

11 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Please, our Budget
12 Chair. You're back.

13 FREEHOLDER SILNA ZUR: Yes.

14 County Executive, thank you.

15 As everyone has touched upon, we know
16 the herculean task that this has been. None of us
17 planned for this. And, as Steve touched upon, it is
18 not only the resilience of the long-term budgeting
19 and the fiscal restraint that we have shown over the
20 last, I would say, 7, 8 years, but certainly
21 throughout your administration, where we have really
22 invested so you can put off and defer certain
23 projects and that it's not going to have long-term
24 impacts.

25 We have never kicked the can down the

1 road in dealing with our infrastructure. We've never
2 shied away what our needs are in the county, but have
3 done so in a responsible, effective, and efficient
4 way.

5 So Moody's, what they piped in,
6 certainly is a testament to that, and how we're going
7 to bounce back from this will also be a testament to
8 the seeds that you planted long ago.

9 So thank you to Joe, to Michael, to
10 Marlene, Michael Kaplan, Sadie, Julien, Michael,
11 Jared, everybody who had their fingers over the
12 budget, all the department and division heads.

13 Most importantly, I want to thank my
14 colleagues, because now the budget is ours and we
15 have a lot to work to do. We have a lot to review in
16 a short period of time, based on our new constraints.
17 And I know that we are going to do our normal,
18 typical, deep dive as we analyze these expenditures.
19 We are all in this together. We all are striving to
20 do what is in the best interest of the residents of
21 Bergen County.

22 You know, we all wish we had a crystal
23 ball right now and we could see into the future, but
24 we are instead going to use what data we do have to
25 make the best judgments that we all can.

1 Thank you all for joining this process
2 and rolling up your sleeves and getting to work over
3 the next couple of weeks so that we can have this
4 introduced in a timely fashion and in compliance with
5 what is required and what is in the best interest of
6 all municipalities.

7 On that note, Madam Chairwoman, thank
8 you also for your continued collaboration as far as
9 this is concerned. This is going to be a fun
10 process.

11 That was sarcasm.

12 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: That's okay, we're
13 going to make it work.

14 We want to hear from Mike Bellucci, if
15 you don't mind, and then we'll go to our next
16 Freeholder.

17 MR. BELLUCCI: Thank you, and I will be
18 quick.

19 I do want to thank specifically Joe
20 Luppino and Melissa Howard for their dedication to
21 this 2020 budget.

22 More specifically, I just want to
23 highlight and thank the County Executive, Jim
24 Tedesco, for his guidance here. While he's dealing
25 with the extraordinary needs during this COVID-19

1 pandemic, he never lost sight on the budget, and he
2 demanded the diligence that myself and the team
3 provided in creating this. So it's very important
4 for me to thank him specifically, as this budget, as
5 you all know, was extremely difficult to put together
6 in a fiscally responsible manner, while just dealing
7 with a minor/major crisis at the same time.

8 So thank you, Jim. I do appreciate all
9 the guidance that led the team to put this together.

10 COUNTY EXECUTIVE TEDESCO: Thank you,
11 Michael.

12 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Are there other
13 Freeholders who would like to speak?

14 David.

15 FREEHOLDER GANZ: I just want to say
16 that the advanced planning by Jim Tedesco and his
17 staff is what makes this budget work. He's able to
18 take \$5 million that was put aside just for an
19 emergent circumstance such as this.

20 We didn't anticipate that this was
21 going to be what the crisis was, but we are able to
22 face it.

23 I'm sure the Freeholders will have
24 additional comments to make, but I'm also certain
25 that we will continue to work with the County

1 Executive in the partnership that he has afforded us.

2 Thank you.

3 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.

4 COUNTY EXECUTIVE TEDESCO: Thank you.

5 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Anyone else?

6 FREEHOLDER ORTIZ: Chairwoman?

7 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Yes, Freeholder

8 Ortiz.

9 FREEHOLDER ORTIZ: I just would like to
10 thank Jim and the administration and everyone
11 involved in this budget.

12 A budget overall is a very difficult
13 task, and just to plan in such an unbelievable
14 situation that we're in, and not only just because
15 it's New Jersey and we were hit hard, but being the
16 largest county in New Jersey, I really applaud you,
17 Jim, and the administration, because it's not only
18 what we faced for these past few months but what we
19 will be facing, because we don't know, we have no
20 idea what we will be facing these next few months.

21 So just to be able to try to work with
22 a budget and what we're going to be working with with
23 the directors and all the department leaders, I
24 really applaud you and I look forward to working with
25 the team. I know we're going to work hard for the

1 residents of Bergen County.

2 Thank you again, and I look forward to
3 working with the team, because I know we're going to
4 make it great for all the residents of Bergen County.

5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. Great.

7 Anyone else?

8 VICE-CHAIRWOMAN VOSS: I just want to
9 thank Jim.

10 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Joan.

11 VICE-CHAIRWOMAN VOSS: I want to thank
12 our County Executive for his leadership. We have
13 some really wonderful, wonderful people working on
14 this budget.

15 I've worked on budgets for many, many
16 years, and this is a herculean task. Our people have
17 really risen to the occasion. I know that we're
18 going to do the best we can for the citizens of
19 Bergen County.

20 Thank you very much, Jim.

21 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay.

22 COUNTY EXECUTIVE TEDESCO: Thank you.

23 FREEHOLDER SULLIVAN: Chairwoman?

24 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Yes, Freeholder
25 Sullivan.

1 FREEHOLDER SULLIVAN: I'm the only one
2 who didn't say anything, so I don't want Jim to be
3 mad at me.

4 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: We can't have
5 that.

6 FREEHOLDER SULLIVAN: I think you guys
7 did a great job. I want to thank you for staying
8 focused throughout such a tough time. As always,
9 your work shines through as well as the staff you
10 picked to help you, like Michael and Joe, Mike Kaplan
11 and all of them. So thank you so much for staying
12 focused and delivering this budget to the Freeholder
13 Board, I appreciate it.

14 Thank you.

15 COUNTY EXECUTIVE TEDESCO: Thanks, Tom.

16 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay, everybody.

17 So we will move on.

18 MINUTES

19 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Will the Clerk
20 read the minutes to be accepted.

21 MS. RODRIGUEZ: The minutes to be
22 accepted are:

23 May 20th - Closed Session; all present.

24 May 6th - Closed Session; all present.

25 May 6th - Public Session; all present.

1 April 15th - Closed Session; all
2 present.

3 April 15th - Public Session; all
4 present.

5 And April 1st - Public Session; all
6 present.

7 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you, Clerk.
8 May have a motion to accept the
9 minutes?

10 FREEHOLDER GANZ: Move the minutes.

11 MR. FLORIO: Chairwoman, if I may
12 interject?

13 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Yes.

14 MR. FLORIO: I thought I heard the
15 Clerk say that the May 20th and a couple of the other
16 minutes to be approved were Closed Sessions. Did the
17 Clerk mean Work Sessions?

18 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Work Session with the
19 Closed component.

20 MR. FLORIO: Okay. Thank you.

21 Thank you, Chairwoman.

22 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. Thank you,
23 Ed.

24 So may I have a motion to accept the
25 minutes?

1 FREEHOLDER GANZ: Move the minutes.

2 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: That was David?

3 FREEHOLDER GANZ: Yes.

4 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Second?

5 VICE-CHAIRWOMAN VOSS: Second.

6 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. Thank you.

7 That was Dr. Voss.

8 All in favor?

9 (All present Freeholders respond in the
10 affirmative.)

11 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Opposed say "nay."

12 (No response.)

13 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. Unanimously
14 approved.

15 HEARING OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC

16 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: May I have a
17 motion to open the meeting to the public?

18 FREEHOLDER TANELLI: So moved.

19 FREEHOLDER SULLIVAN: Second.

20 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: All in favor?

21 (All present Freeholders respond in the
22 affirmative.)

23 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Opposed say "nay."

24 (No response.)

25 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. Unanimously

1 approved.

2 We will now have the Hearing of the
3 General Public, with a three-minute time limit in
4 effect, in accordance with the Bergen County
5 Freeholder bylaws.

6 Those members of the public who have
7 logged in to participate during the public comment
8 period of the meeting, let me offer the following
9 guidance.

10 Look at the six round buttons in the
11 center bottom of the video screen. Click on the
12 circle that contains three horizontal dots in order
13 to raise your hand and be recognized to speak.
14 Please speak.

15 You can also type your name, town, and
16 topic in the group chat in order to be recognized,
17 and we will hear from counselor Florio.

18 MR. FLORIO: A member of the public
19 who's recognized to speak by the Chair will be
20 unmuted by the moderator and will have three minutes
21 to speak. At the end of the three minutes, the
22 moderator will mute the speaker.

23 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. Is there
24 anyone from the public who would like to speak? We
25 have our WebEx guys on to tell us that.

1 MS. KARPINSKI: Chairwoman, Melissa
2 Howard would like to be recognized to speak for
3 public comment.

4 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Certainly.
5 Melissa?

6 Are we able to get Melissa on?

7 MR. SHEINFIELD: She's on.

8 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay.
9 Melissa?

10 MR. SHEINFIELD: She may have done it
11 erroneously and left. She's not muted.

12 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. So she is
13 not available, I guess.

14 Okay. WebEx guys, anybody else?

15 MS. KARPINSKI: Chairwoman, at this
16 time no other members of the public have indicated
17 that they would like to speak.

18 FREEHOLDER GANZ: Move to close.

19 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Second?

20 FREEHOLDER ORTIZ: Second.

21 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.

22 All in favor?

23 (All present Freeholders respond in the
24 affirmative.)

25 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Opposed say "nay."

1 (No response.)

2 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. The public
3 portion is now closed. Thank you.

4 RESOLUTIONS OF CONSENT

5 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: We will now review
6 the resolutions to be voted on this evening.

7 Clerk.

8 MS. RODRIGUEZ: The resolutions to be
9 voted on are:

10 Resolutions #350-20 through #375-20.

11 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.

12 May I have a motion to accept the
13 resolutions as a Consent Agenda?

14 VICE-CHAIRWOMAN VOSS: So moved.

15 FREEHOLDER SULLIVAN: Second.

16 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. Very good.
17 Roll call, please.

18 (At this point in the proceeding roll
19 call is taken and the Consent Agenda is passed by a
20 unanimous vote.)

21 MS. RODRIGUEZ: With seven ayes, the
22 Consent Agenda is approved.

23 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Are there any
24 resolutions on Nonconsent, tabled or pulled?

25 MS. RODRIGUEZ: There are none.

1 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.

2 FREEHOLDER COMMITTEE REPORTS

3 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: We will now have
4 the Freeholder Committee Reports.

5 As has been our practice, we will go
6 alphabetically.

7 Freeholder Ganz.

8 FREEHOLDER GANZ: Thank you,
9 Chairwoman.

10 First of all, I would like to wish a
11 Happy Pride Month to all. This is a time that is
12 difficult. We hopefully will celebrate Pride bigger
13 and better.

14 Though now sheltered at home, June is
15 the time that we're going to adopt and get in
16 shelters throughout Bergen County, and, in
17 particular, our Bergen County Animal Shelter.

18 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: There's your cat.

19 FREEHOLDER GANZ: I see that I am being
20 visited. This is our shelter cat.

21 Through the years, my wife and I have
22 adopted several cats from the Bergen County Animal
23 Shelter.

24 Today I spoke with the leader of our
25 shelter, Deb Yankow, who told me a little bit about

1 the environment, what the new shelter is going to
2 look like. They have plexiglass installed, it is
3 entirely safe. Social distancing guidelines will be
4 sent to determine the reopening of the shelter, so we
5 can reassure our animals a safe reopening and a safe
6 environment.

7 (DOG BARKING)

8 FREEHOLDER GANZ: I think that that's
9 telling me that my time is up.

10 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Yes, that's our
11 time-counting dog.

12 FREEHOLDER GANZ: Thank you,
13 Chairwoman.

14 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you,
15 Freeholder.

16 Pleasure to meet your cat.

17 Freeholder Ortiz, do you have any pets
18 to put forth?

19 FREEHOLDER ORTIZ: I'm sorry, that was
20 my dog.

21 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: I know.

22 FREEHOLDER ORTIZ: I'll keep it short.
23 I know everyone is tired. It's been a long meeting.

24 First of all, I'd like to wish Happy
25 Pride Month to everyone, not only here in Bergen

1 County but throughout the state and the country.

2 I would also again want to thank
3 everyone who's been working hard throughout COVID. I
4 would like to thank also our two COVID mobile trucks
5 that have been doing a fabulous job.

6 Thank you, Jim, and thank you to New
7 Bridge and everyone that's been working hard with the
8 COVID trucks. What a great schedule that they've
9 had, and everybody's been very happy. I've been
10 getting a lot of feedback. So thank you so much for
11 that.

12 I also would like to give my census
13 update. We're at the halfway point through the
14 census, and we're now getting a lot of feedback, and
15 I'm getting a lot of the midway reports from all the
16 different municipalities.

17 What I'm happy to report is that we're
18 at 68.9 percent. We're only 3.5 percent away from
19 our 72.4 percent, which we reported in 2010.

20 I'm sure, with all our hard work and
21 all the efforts throughout all the municipalities and
22 through all the nonprofits and the Complete Count
23 Committee, I know we're going to definitely surpass
24 that and we're going to do a great job.

25 What I'm excited to report today,

1 besides Glen Rock that I reported at my last meeting,
2 we have had a lot of towns that have actually
3 surpassed the numbers from 2010. Ridgewood, that
4 reported already 79 percent versus 77.9 in 2010.
5 River Edge, 80.7 versus the 80.4 in 2010. Oradell is
6 at 82.4, it was previously at 81.4. Upper Saddle
7 River is at 77.1 versus 75.7 in 2010. And Leonia is
8 at 76.3 versus 76.8.

9 So I'm very excited that all the towns
10 are doing a great job. And as businesses continue to
11 open up, I'm excited that we'll be back to some
12 normalcy and we'll be able to do a lot more. We can
13 do a lot more events and be out there. And actually
14 the New Jersey Census is going to have these huge
15 trucks that we're going to be driving around Bergen
16 County in the next two weeks. We're trying to
17 coordinate it with the COVID mobile, which is what
18 we're trying to do, but I really need to get them to
19 the hard-to-count areas and really push for the
20 census efforts.

21 So thank you, Chairwoman, and good
22 night.

23 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you,
24 Freeholder Ortiz.

25 Freeholder Sullivan.

1 FREEHOLDER SULLIVAN: Thank you,
2 Chairwoman.

3 I would just like to quickly mention
4 that tonight we passed Resolution #363-20, which is a
5 shared service agreement with the City of Hackensack
6 to improve the intersection of Kinderkamack Road and
7 Jefferson Street. This was a project that was
8 brought to the attention of both Hackensack and the
9 county, and we worked together to correct the issues
10 while saving on costs.

11 I always like to bring up, as I said,
12 the shared services. That is a very integral part of
13 the county, how we save the taxpayers money and how
14 we save the municipalities money as well. So every
15 week I will always comment on the shared services.

16 It's great to see so many people taking
17 advantage of our various testing sites, both mobile
18 and static. These tests are crucial to getting us
19 through this pandemic, and I am very proud that
20 Bergen County took whatever steps that were necessary
21 to make testing available to everyone. It wasn't an
22 easy process, but, like I said previously, with the
23 County Executive and his team, they really did a
24 wonderful job and the residents of Bergen County
25 should really realize how lucky they are that they

1 have people like that working for them.

2 Lastly, I'd just like to continue my
3 high praise for all of our frontline workers, health
4 care, first responders, teachers and many others who
5 are committed to helping our community during these
6 times. Please know that I thank you and I appreciate
7 all of you, both as a Freeholder but also as a
8 resident.

9 It looks like we may have turned the
10 corner and we'll be moving towards a new normal. I
11 hope there is nothing but positive things ahead, but
12 saying that, we need to make sure that we still take
13 all the possible precautions and let's not just
14 forget that what we went through is far from over.
15 We may be opening some things here a little at a
16 time, but we still need to be responsible and take
17 every precaution we can, because we don't want to
18 wind up right back where we were.

19 And that concludes my report.

20 Thank you, Chairwoman.

21 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you,

22 Freeholder Sullivan.

23 Freeholder Tanelli.

24 FREEHOLDER TANELLI: I will be the

25 shortest this evening.

1 All I would like to do is thank all the
2 frontline workers, first responders, and the county
3 staff as we get closer to reopening life. So keep up
4 the good work, and I look forward to getting back to
5 the new norm.

6 Thank you, Chairwoman.

7 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.

8 We are moving on to Freeholder
9 Vice-Chair Voss.

10 MR. SHEINFELD: She has lost Internet
11 connectivity at her house.

12 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. You know
13 what, it is storming pretty violently, maybe that has
14 something to do with it.

15 We'll move along. If we get her back,
16 we'll take her.

17 Freeholder Zur.

18 FREEHOLDER SILNA ZUR: I am so excited
19 to announce that, first of all, Project Search, which
20 you all know is such an amazing program. We give
21 young people, young adults with unique abilities
22 opportunities to have portable job skills.

23 Graduation; even though the last
24 semester, the last trimester of their quarter ended
25 up being virtual, they all still got so much out of

1 this program. The graduation for the Holy Name kids
2 is going to be this coming week.

3 But I'm even more excited next year
4 that the County of Bergen is going to be the business
5 site as the host for Project Search, and that's going
6 to be the Prosecutor's Office, the Administration,
7 the Freeholder Board, the Sheriff. We're all going
8 to provide wonderful internship experiences for these
9 young people. This is for students who are in their
10 last year of education or young adults who are 21 to
11 30. We have had a very vibrant applicant pool, which
12 I was really pleased to see, despite the ongoing
13 pandemic that people are still excited to getting
14 their kids to work and getting the skills to be able
15 to live meaningful independent lives.

16 There is still time to apply, until
17 June 19th. You can reach out to Tara Bohan at
18 201-343-6000, extension 4079, or TARBOH@Bergen.org,
19 if you are interested in being part of the next class
20 of Project Search.

21 Also I want to thank so many who were
22 involved today in the food distribution event that
23 took place in Fairview. I was there at 7:00 this
24 morning. The lines didn't open in giving out food
25 until almost nine, but hundreds of people were in

1 line, and it really underscored the face of what food
2 insecurity in Bergen County looks like throughout
3 this pandemic.

4 In collaboration with the Community
5 Food Bank of New Jersey, the Volunteer Center, the
6 Bergen County Prosecutor's Office, the Sheriff's
7 Department, the amazing leadership of Mayor Bellucci
8 and Mayor Calabrese in Cliffside Park and their
9 entire teams on the ground there, we gave out, we,
10 the county and all of us in the county as well, gave
11 out 1,020 boxes of food with two weeks' worth of
12 nonperishable food, including shelf stable protein,
13 plus produce and chicken and food that really can
14 support a family in a dignified way as they're
15 dealing with hunger as a result of this pandemic.

16 This is a problem that's going to
17 require attention long beyond people's attention
18 spans. Once people go back to work in the new
19 normal, the scars of this pandemic are still going to
20 be there on the food insecurity side. We see that in
21 our Meals on Wheels program, we see that in our Board
22 of Social Services.

23 If you or anyone you know are dealing
24 with hunger issues, please reach out to the Board of
25 Social Services at BCBSS.com and see what benefits

1 you can take advantage of and utilize. They are
2 there to help people who are dealing with these
3 issues. Or reach out to the Center for Food Action
4 at Inquiry at CFANJ.org. There are resources for
5 those who are in need throughout the county.

6 It was a hot, muggy day today, and
7 there's so much gratitude to all the volunteers who
8 are on the front lines and all the people throughout
9 the county in so many different efforts, who are on
10 the front lines trying to help their neighbors
11 through that crisis.

12 One last thing. As you notice, I
13 popped off for one moment. It was because it was
14 also my daughter's senior awards ceremony tonight.
15 She received the Marilyn Baden Award for Excellence
16 because of her tremendous responsibility being stage
17 manager and all of her passion for theater arts.

18 I just want to add a special
19 congratulations to all of the graduates. My eighth
20 grader is graduating on Friday, my high schooler on
21 Sunday. It's with very mixed feelings and emotions
22 as we hit these milestones, but it doesn't underscore
23 the accomplishments that all of these kids have had
24 dealing with the adversity of virtual learning, and I
25 just want to add a special sense of gratitude to all

1 of the teachers who have made all of this journey
2 possible.

3 Thank you, Chairwoman.

4 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: That's lovely.
5 Thank you, Freeholder Tracy.

6 I want to point out that someone wanted
7 to join us after we closed, a member of the public
8 after we closed the public portion. We will make
9 sure he is on first next time. Sorry.

10 And also after I speak, we'll have a
11 few words from our County Executive.

12 So Happy Pride Month.

13 I'm happy to report that apparently
14 Wyckoff is raising its Pride flag this year. Last
15 year there was a big controversy. We all went up and
16 stood outside and held Pride banners, but they
17 weren't allowing the Pride flag to fly, and this year
18 it's flying in Wyckoff. I'm very happy about that.

19 Also let us celebrate our friends at
20 Hackensack University Medical Center who were
21 profiled nationally Sunday on 60 minutes on CBS for
22 their groundbreaking work to take antibodies from the
23 blood of recovered COVID patients to help cure sick
24 patients. They have a trial on that going on.

25 We spent a lot of time on the budget.

1 We will begin our budget hearings really on
2 June 15th, so stay tuned.

3 Also starting June 15th is Phase II of
4 the reopening of New Jersey's economy. That means
5 outdoor dining in restaurants, in-store limited
6 retail.

7 Hair and nail salons and other personal
8 care venues should be opening starting June 22nd. I
9 can't wait.

10 Sometime after that look for the
11 reopening of the libraries and summer camps.

12 I got tested last week at one of the
13 county's testing vans. It was easy and painless. It
14 makes you feel like you're doing your bit to
15 contribute to the baseline metrics. I was negative
16 for the virus and negative for antibodies.

17 Finally, most of us are just exhausted
18 by loss. All the loss of months of the COVID
19 pandemic. Fear of death. Loss of people who
20 succumbed. Loss of employment. Loss of freedom of
21 mobility and seeing people in ordinary social
22 circumstances.

23 Add to that all the recent loss of our
24 fellow Americans, George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery,
25 Breonna Taylor, and both the peaceful and violent

1 massing of concerned and angry citizens in the
2 streets across the country.

3 Let us all reflect and advocate for all
4 victims and potential victims of gun violence.

5 Gun Violence Awareness Day is Friday,
6 June 5th.

7 Thank you.

8 COMMENTS BY THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

9 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: County Executive.

10 COUNTY EXECUTIVE TEDESCO: Thank you,
11 Freeholder Chairwoman. I'll be brief.

12 I want to thank the employees of Bergen
13 County for the last three months for their
14 outstanding work.

15 The Health Department has stood tall
16 with the 35 towns that we've supported and the work
17 that they have done in contact tracing, in helping us
18 get the mobile unit up, the partnership that we have
19 with Bergen New Bridge Medical Center, and our
20 ability to, as you said, test our employees and the
21 public in a very noninvasive way using saliva.

22 We're the only county in the state,
23 outside of Middlesex, that has a relationship with
24 Rutgers to be able to do this in the entire state and
25 then offer antibody testing at the same time with the

1 folks from New Bridge helping us do that. The
2 partnership that we have is just remarkable and it's
3 a testament to the Freeholder Board and the
4 administration for continuing the relationship and
5 changing Bergen Regional to Bergen New Bridge Medical
6 Center, and the work that they're doing to help so
7 many with the telemedicine and the proactive approach
8 of allowing people to come there and be tested.

9 I just want the people of Bergen County
10 to know that anybody that lives in Bergen County or
11 works for a municipality in Bergen County can be
12 tested free. There's no charge. And tomorrow we're
13 in Park Ridge taking Park Ridge, Woodcliff Lake and
14 Montvale, those three towns and anyone else that's up
15 in the north that wants to come, and Friday we'll be
16 in Oradell at the Oradell Swim Club. Again, that's
17 River Edge, New Milford, Oradell, Paramus.

18 And, again, I encourage and urge
19 everybody, as you said, to come and get tested.

20 Two things.

21 If you are an active carrier, you know,
22 we want to know, because I'm sure your friends and
23 family want to know and everyone else. That's how we
24 stop the spread. If you've had it or you didn't know
25 or you were asymptomatic, then the antibody test will

1 help identify that and then you could donate your
2 plasma to then help others.

3 Lastly, we want to make sure that we're
4 able to, as you said, have a baseline of employees,
5 because those that test negative, like you just
6 described yourself, I don't want to violate HIPAA,
7 but you divulged that.

8 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: I did.
9 Self-disclosed, right.

10 COUNTY EXECUTIVE TEDESCO: But now you
11 know that you still have to watch and you still have
12 to do the things to continue to prevent getting the
13 virus and getting sick. So those are the benefits of
14 why we want to test.

15 And then the contract tracing part of
16 it is the other piece that here in Bergen County
17 we've been aggressively doing for months and we'll
18 continue to do that for all those that are testing
19 positive so that we can stop the spread.

20 There were many months before where I
21 said we're not able to stop it but we want to slow it
22 down. Now I believe we have opportunities to get to
23 a place where we can stop it.

24 So the good things that we're doing
25 with our county employees and our partnerships, OEM,

1 DPW, I mean I just can't name them all that are part
2 of the mobile process and the things that have
3 happened over the last three months to support the
4 million people here in Bergen County has just been
5 outstanding and my hat's off to all our employees.

6 Most of all, let me say to all the
7 residents of Bergen County and to you, Freeholders,
8 how much I appreciate all the work that everybody has
9 done to help us get through this. It's not been
10 easy. You know, I've gotten wonderful phone calls
11 and I've gotten not so wonderful phone calls, but I
12 understand it. We can't please everybody, nor can
13 the Governor, nor can anyone, but we all do what we
14 think is the right thing on behalf of the people.

15 I know here in Bergen County we've done
16 all the right things for the people. They'll be
17 people that will have an opportunity at some point to
18 look back and say you could have done better, or, you
19 know, why did you do this, but for the three months
20 that we've now just got past or tomorrow is the
21 three-month anniversary on the fourth.

22 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Wow!

23 COUNTY EXECUTIVE TEDESCO: The things
24 that have happened here in Bergen County haven't
25 happened to any other place in the state, and, in

1 some cases, in the country. But everybody working
2 together has made us come through it.

3 And as I said way back on the third,
4 when I held my first press conference, we're going to
5 be prepared, and at the end of this we'll come
6 through even a better county.

7 So thank you to all the Freeholders for
8 helping us get through this. To the people of Bergen
9 County, thank you.

10 But most of all, we need to continue to
11 do what we've been doing. We can't stop. It's not
12 over. It's slowing, it's being minimized, but if we
13 let our guard down, it will come back just as fast.

14 So my message to the people of Bergen
15 County, stay the course. We will get through this,
16 and we will get through this and the new normal will
17 be something that we all can continue to be proud of.

18 Thank you, Freeholder Chairwoman.

19 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. Thank you.

20 Thank you, county employees and thank
21 you, County Executive. Thank you. Thank you.

22 There being nothing further to come
23 before this meeting, may I have a motion to adjourn?

24 FREEHOLDER TANELLI: So moved.

25 FREEHOLDER SILNA ZUR: Second.

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FREEHOLDER ORTIZ: Second.

CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. All in favor?

(All present Freeholders respond in the affirmative.)

CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Opposed say "nay."

(No response.)

CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. We are therefore adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Bye, everybody.

(Whereupon, the Public Meeting is adjourned at 8:39 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, KIM O. FURBACHER, License No. XIO1042, a Certified Court Reporter, Registered Merit Reporter, Certified Realtime Court Reporter, and Notary Public of the State of New Jersey, hereby certify that the foregoing is a verbatim record of the testimony provided under oath before any court, referee, board, commission or other body created by statute of the State of New Jersey.

I am not related to the parties involved in this action; I have no financial interest, nor am I related to an agent of or employed by anyone with a financial interest in the outcome of this action.

This transcript complies with Regulation 13:43-5.9 of the New Jersey Administrative Code.

KIM O. FURBACHER, CRCR, CCR, RMR
License #XIO1042, and Notary Public
of New Jersey

My Commission Expires:
7/11/2024